



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **COUNCIL** held at The Guildhall, Mill Street, Ludlow on **WEDNESDAY 14th MAY 2025** at **7.00 PM**.

FC/01 PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor Waite
 Councillor Lyle

Councillors: Addis; Childs; Cowell; Gill; Ginger; Harris; Hepworth; Owen;
 Parry; Scott-Bell; Tapley; Taylor; Waite

Officers: Gina Wilding, Town Clerk
 Lucy Jones, Senior Finance Assistant
 Helen Jones, Senior Administration Assistant

ABSENT

Councillors: Maxwell-Muller

FC/02 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Mayor, Councillor Waite, welcomed everyone to the Full Council meeting and made some health and safety announcements.

FC/03 Councillor Waite read a statement:

“I wish to raise a concern regarding the participation of certain members in discussion and voting on the agenda item concerning the repair of the church wall.

It is a matter of record that Councillor Childs, Councillor Hepworth, and Councillor Owen have submitted written representations to the Shropshire Council Monitoring Officer regarding my actions in this matter, both as a Councillor and as Mayor. Given the strength and nature of their previously expressed views, I am concerned that a fair-minded and informed observer may conclude that there is a real possibility of bias or predetermination.

I have sought informal advice on this point from the Legal and Democracy Officer at Shropshire Council.

Accordingly, I request the following:

1. That Councillor Childs, Councillor Hepworth, and Councillor Owen be invited to consider whether they should declare an interest or recuse themselves from debate and voting on this item, in line with the principles of natural justice and the Code of Conduct.
2. That, should they choose to participate, the Monitoring Officer be asked to note this concern, and it be recorded in the minutes for the sake of transparency and potential follow-up.
3. That no attempt is made by this Council to compel or enforce a recusal without the guidance of the Monitoring Officer, but that the matter be taken seriously and handled with procedural fairness.

I submit this not as an allegation but as a precaution, in the interests of ensuring the integrity of the decision-making process and protecting both the Council and individual members from future challenge.”

Councillor Owen confirmed that prior to election, they had submitted two complaints as a member of the public to the Shropshire Council Monitoring Officer concerning alleged breaches of the code of conduct by three councillors, including Councillors Beverley Waite and Glenn Ginger. The first complaint concerned the non-release of the Morton report on the town wall, which was later made public in December. The second related to a perceived public safety risk following a decision in January to disclaim responsibility for the emergency stabilisation works on the wall. Councillor Owen confirmed they have assessed any potential bias and are satisfied that their prior complaints do not affect their ability to vote impartially on matters such as the election of Mayor or committee appointments. They affirmed their commitment to consider all relevant information objectively in their role.

Councillor Childs stated their intention to declare a potential interest and seek guidance from the Clerk regarding a prior complaint they submitted last year to the Monitoring Officer about the Mayor, Councillor Beverley Waite, concerning an alleged breach of the code of conduct. Councillor Childs suggested that if such a declaration affects voting eligibility, then others who have submitted complaints should also refrain from voting, emphasising the principle of equal treatment.

Councillor Hepworth stated that Councillor Waite had been a very active Mayor, and was very aware and grateful for the work they had put into the role. Councillor Hepworth felt that having assessed any potential bias they were satisfied that the prior complaints were in the past and did not affect their ability to vote impartially on the election of Mayor.

FC/04 ELECTION OF MAYOR 2025/26

Councillor Waite invited nominations for Mayor.

Councillor Addis nominated Councillor Lyle. This nomination was seconded by Councillor Taylor.

Councillor Tapley nominated Councillor Waite. This nomination was seconded by Councillor Gill.

A paper ballot was taken.

Councillor Lyle received 9 votes.
Councillor Waite received 5 votes.

RESOLVED (9:5:0) PA/MT

To elect Councillor Lyle as Mayor for 2025/26.

Councillor Lyle signed the Declaration of Office and chaired the meeting.

19.14pm Councillor Waite left the meeting.

FC/05 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2025/26

The Mayor of Ludlow, Councillor Lyle invited nominations for Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Owen nominated Councillor Cowell. This nomination was seconded by Councillor Hepworth.

There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED (11:0:2) RO/JH

To elect Councillor Cowell as Deputy Mayor for 2025/26.

Councillor Cowell signed the Declaration of Office.

FC/06 RECORDING OF MEETINGS

The Mayor notified those present that under the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014, recording and broadcasting is permitted during public session of Council Meetings. The act of recording and broadcasting must not interfere with the meeting.

FC/07 Councillor Childs asked whether it was possible to formally record or broadcast the council meetings, and it was agreed that an agenda item would be brought to a future meeting.

FC/08 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Maxwell-Muller (prior commitment to give a presentation).

FC/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

Conflicts of Interest

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Councillor Addis		Local business owner
Councillor Parry	17c	Planting SC owned beds
Councillor Lyle		Organising Fringe Festival events

Personal Interests

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Councillor Cowell	34b	Knows nominee
Councillor Lyle	34b	Knows nominees
Councillor Parry	34b	Knows nominees

FC/10 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were nine members of the public in attendance.

A resident of Ludlow questioned the Council on the eligibility of Councillor Hepworth to be elected on to the Town Council. In his nomination papers, he stated that he has lived in Ludlow for the last 12 months, and on his campaign literature, he said he's lived in Ludlow for the last 40 years. Neither of those statements are true. Councillor Hepworth is registered to vote in Herefordshire, in the parish of Wigmore, and his residential property exceeds the statute limitation from the parish boundary. The resident asks for clarification on the eligibility criteria that allows him to stand on Ludlow Town Council.

A resident of Ludlow reminded the Council of its legally binding obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Equality Act 2010, emphasising that these are not optional and carry significant reputational risks if not upheld. Concerns were raised about reported discussions to reduce Council staffing. The speaker urged caution, noting the risks of service disruption, increased costs, reduced morale, and potential legal and reputational consequences associated with redundancies and dismissals. Finally, the speaker addressed recent behavioural issues within the Council, including reports of bullying, anonymous hate mail, and Councillors experiencing distress. Such conduct was described as unacceptable and damaging to both the Council and the town's reputation. Councillors were urged to reflect on their responsibilities as role models and to adhere to the LGA Code of Conduct, particularly in showing respect to one another and the public.

A resident of Ludlow wished to congratulate the Councillors on their election, noting this as the most significant numerical change they had seen on the

Council. They expressed optimism for a refreshed approach and hoped the Council would support the buoyancy of Ludlow, particularly in trading, tourism, and the tone of its conduct.

FC/11 LUDLOW POLICE UPDATE

Apologies were received from the Safer Neighbourhood Team with a written update, which was circulated amongst members.

FC/12 LUDLOW'S UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION

Councillor Parry (Ludlow South) thanked the public for voting, and confirmed that they will be continuing with open surgeries at the Library on the first Friday of the month, and on the first Saturday of the month at Ashford Carbonell.

FC/13 MINUTES

RESOLVED GG/TG (8:0:5)

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 14th April 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

FC/14 ITEMS TO ACTION

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

That the Items to Action be noted.

FC/15 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

That the Committee Structure of Representational Committee, Policy & Finance Committee, Staffing Committee and Services Committee be adopted.

FC/16 RESOLVED DL/RO (unanimous)

That the Meeting Protocol be adopted.

FC/17 REPRESENTATIONAL COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED GG/AT (unanimous)

That the Terms of Reference for Representational Committee be adopted.

FC/18 REPRESENTATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED DL/PA (unanimous)

That the membership of Representational Committee, consisting of Councillors Addis, Cowell, Gill, Ginger, Harris, Hepworth, Lyle, Owen, Parry, Scott-Bell and Tapley, be approved.

FC/19 ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIR

Councillor Parry nominated Councillor Ginger. This was seconded by Councillor Cowell. Councillor Ginger declined the nomination.

Councillor Parry nominated Councillor Gill. Councillor Gill declined the nomination.

Councillor Harris self-nominated. This was seconded by Councillor Tapley.

RESOLVED SH/AT (7:0:6)

That Councillor Harris be elected Chair of Representational Committee for 2025/26.

FC/20 RESOLVED DL/JH (unanimous)

To change the order of the agenda so that consideration of Services Committee comes before Policy & Finance Committee.

FC/21 SERVICES COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED DL/AT (unanimous)

That the Terms of Reference for Services Committee be adopted.

FC/22 SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED DL/VP (unanimous)

That the membership of the Services Committee, consisting of Councillors Addis, Childs, Cowell, Gill, Ginger, Harris, Hepworth, Lyle, Parry, Tapley and Taylor, be approved.

FC/23 ELECTION OF SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIR 2025/26

Councillor Addis nominated Councillor Cowell. This was seconded by Councillor Hepworth.

Councillor Parry self-nominated. This was seconded by Councillor Harris.

Councillor Cowell received 7 votes.

Councillor Parry received 4 votes.

RESOLVED PA/JH (7:4:0)

That Councillor Cowell be elected Chair of Services Committee for 2025/26.

FC/24 POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED DL/KC (unanimous)

That the Terms of Reference for the Policy & Finance Committee be adopted.

FC/25 POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

That the membership of the Policy & Finance Committee, consisting of Councillors Childs, Cowell, Gill, Ginger, Harris, Hepworth, Lyle, Owen, Parry, Scott-Bell and Taylor, be approved.

FC/26 ELECTION OF POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR 2025/26

Councillor Parry nominated Councillor Ginger. Councillor Ginger declined the nomination.

Councillor Hepworth nominated Councillor Owen. This was seconded by Councillor Taylor.

RESOLVED JH/MT (8:0:3)

That Councillor Owen be elected as Chair of Policy & Finance Committee for 2025/26.

FC/27 AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES

RESOLVED DL/KC (unanimous)

That Councillors Gill, Ginger, Lyle, Owen, Parry and Taylor be approved as Authorised Signatories.

FC/28 DIRECT DEBITS

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

That the Council's active direct debits be approved.

FC/29 COUNCIL PAYMENTS PROCEDURE

RESOLVED DL/KC (unanimous)

That the procedure for Council payments be noted.

FC/30 STAFFING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED DL/AT (unanimous)

That the Terms of Reference for the Staffing Committee be adopted.

FC/31 STAFFING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED DL/JH (unanimous)

That the membership of the Staffing Committee, consisting of Councillors Cowell, Gill, Harris, Hepworth, Lyle, Owen and Scott-Bell, be approved.

FC/32 ELECTION OF STAFFING COMMITTEE CHAIR 2025/26

Councillor Cowell nominated Councillor Scott-Bell. This was seconded by Councillor Hepworth.

There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED KC/JH (unanimous)

That Councillor Scott-Bell be elected as Chair of Staffing Committee for 2025/26.

FC/33 CLIMATE ACTION TASK & FINISH GROUP

RESOLVED DL/SH (unanimous)

That the Terms of Reference for the Climate Action Task & Finish Group be adopted.

FC/34 RESOLVED DL/AT (unanimous)

That the membership of the Climate Action Task & Finish Group, consisting of Councillors Cowell, Lyle, Parry and Tapley, be approved.

FC/35 BUDGET TASK & FINISH GROUP

RESOLVED DL/MT (11:0:2)

That the membership of the Budget Task & Finish Group, consisting of Councillors Cowell, Gill, Ginger, Hepworth, Lyle, Owen, Scott-Bell and Taylor, be approved; to commence 2026/27 budget setting activities with the Town Clerk/RFO in July 2025.

FC/36 TOWN PLANTERS WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED KC/DL (12:0:1)

That the membership of the Town Planters Working Group, consisting of Councillors Cowell and Lyle, be approved.

FC/37 MEETING CALENDAR

RESOLVED DL/KC (unanimous)

That the Council/Committee calendar dates for May and June 2025 (set to enable the statutory requirements of the external audit) be noted.

FC/38 RESOLVED DL/MT (unanimous)

That the Council/Committee calendar dates from July 2025 to June 2026 be adopted.

FC/39 STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED DL/GG (unanimous)

That the Council's Standing Orders be adopted.

FC/40 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

RESOLVED JH/DC (12:0:1)

That the Council's Financial Regulations be adopted, subject to a review through Policy & Finance Committee.

FC/41 COUNCIL'S LAND AND ASSETS

RESOLVED MT/JH (unanimous)

That the Council's Asset Register be adopted, subject to a review through Policy & Finance Committee.

FC/42 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

RESOLVED DL/KC (unanimous)

That the NALC topic be noted.

FC/43 RESOLVED DL/TG (12:0:1)

That the Council's Scheme of Delegation be adopted.

FC/44 INTERNAL CONTROLS

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

That the Council's Internal Controls Policy be adopted, and the review date be amended to annual.

FC/45 RESOLVED KC/SH (unanimous)

That the Council's Risk Assessments be adopted.

It was also agreed that Policy & Finance Committee should consider changes to the provision of Councillor DBS checks to be funded from the contingencies budget.

FC/46 COMPLAINTS POLICIES

RESOLVED ISB/DC (unanimous)

That the Council's Complaints Policy be adopted, subject to a review through Policy & Finance Committee.

FC/47 RESOLVED DL/SH (unanimous)

That the Vexatious Complainants Policy be adopted.

FC/48 INSURANCE

RESOLVED JH/MT (unanimous)

That the insurance cover in respect of all insured risks is adopted.

That Policy & Finance Committee should review insurance provision / seek quotes and make a recommendation to Full Council prior to the renewal date at the end of August 2025.

FC/49 RESOLVED JH/MT (unanimous)

That vehicle insurance cover be adopted.

That Policy & Finance Committee should review insurance provision / seek quotes and make a recommendation to Full Council prior to the renewal date at the end of August 2025.

FC/50 MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL BODIES

RESOLVED DL/PA (unanimous)

That the policy on Council Representation on Outside Organisations be adopted.

FC/51 SALC REPRESENTATIVES FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillors Lyle and Parry are appointed the Town Council representatives.

FC/52 PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

To be deferred to the next Council meeting.

FC/53 LUDLOW ASSEMBLY ROOMS REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Gill is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/54 LUDLOW HOSPITAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Childs is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/55 LUDLOW CHAMBER REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Taylor is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/56 ACCESS GROUP REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Tapley is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/57 CONSERVATION TRUST FOR ST LAURENCE REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Owen is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/58 LUDLOW FOOD NETWORK REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Harris is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/59 GALLOWS BANK TRUST REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Lyle is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/60 JOB CHARLTON TRUST ALMSHOUSES REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

Two Councillor requests: Councillor Gill and Councillor Parry.

Councillor Parry received 5 votes.

Councillor Gill received 4 votes.

RESOLVED DL/TG (5:4:4)

Councillor Parry is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/61 ELIZABETH MASSEY ALMSHOUSES REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

Two Councillor requests: Councillor Gill and Councillor Parry.

Councillor Parry received 5 votes.

Councillor Gill received 4 votes.

RESOLVED DL/TG (5:4:4)

Councillor Parry is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/62 HOSYER-FOXES ALMSHOUSES REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

Two Councillor requests: Councillor Gill and Councillor Parry.

Councillor Parry received 5 votes.

Councillor Gill received 4 votes.

RESOLVED DL/TG (5:4:4)

Councillor Parry is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/63 SOUTH SHROPSHIRE YOUTH FORUM REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Harris is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/64 FAIRTRADE STEERING GROUP REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

To be deferred to the next council meeting.

**FC/65 SHROPSHIRE HILLS AND LUDLOW TOURISM DESTINATION
PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26**

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Scott-Bell is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/66 WIGLEY FIELD ALLOTMENTS REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Lyle is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/67 BOXING CLUB REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Hepworth is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/68 FRIENDS OF LUDLOW MUSEUM REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

To be deferred to the next council meeting.

FC/69 LUDLOW 21 GROUP – GREEN FESTIVAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Lyle is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/70 LUDLOW 21 TRANSPORT GROUP REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Lyle is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/71 FRENCH TWINNING REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Scott-Bell is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/72 STEPHEN HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

Councillor Cowell is appointed the Town Council representative.

FC/73 MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES

RESOLVED DL/RO (unanimous)

That the Council's continued Membership of Professional Bodies be approved.

FC/74 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

RESOLVED DC/RO (unanimous)

That the Council's Freedom of Information Policy be adopted, subject to a review by Policy & Finance Committee.

FC/75 RESOLVED (12:0:1)

That the Model Publication Scheme be adopted.

FC/76 MEETING EXTENSION

RESOLVED DL/KC (unanimous)

That the meeting be extended by 15 minutes.

FC/77 PRESS PROTOCOL

RESOLVED DL/KC (12:0:1)

That the Press Protocol be adopted, subject to a review through Policy & Finance Committee.

FC/78 DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

RESOLVED KC/MT (12:0:1)

That the Data Protection Policy be adopted, subject to a review through Policy & Finance Committee.

FC/79 MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE

RESOLVED GG/SH (9:0:4)

That the Mayor's annual allowance of £3,280.00 be approved for 2025/26.

FC/80 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE (GPC)

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

That, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, s.8 and The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, Ludlow Town Council meets the criteria for eligibility and is therefore entitled to exercise the General Power of Competence.

The Council confirms that:

- a) The Town Clerk holds the relevant CiLCA qualification; and,
- b) At the time of this resolution, the number of Councillors elected at the last ordinary election or at a subsequent by-election equals or exceeds two-thirds of the total number of Councillors.

FC/81 MEETING EXTENSION

RESOLVED DL/TG (unanimous)

That the meeting be extended by 15 minutes.

FC/82 COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED GG/SH (unanimous)

That the minutes of the Representational Committee meeting held on 8th April 2025 be received.

FC/83 RESOLVED GG/AT (unanimous)

That the minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on 23rd April 2025 be received.

FC/84 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED DL/KC (unanimous)

That that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business pursuant to section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, and the meeting continue in closed session.

The meeting closed at 9.20PM.

Town Mayor

Date

Closed session minutes will be issued for this meeting.